

How do I find out who is investigating a complaint?

Contact OCCP offices in the following areas:

Region 1 OCCP

N 1425 Washington
Spokane, WA 99220-4038
(509) 456-3925; (509) 458-2072.

(Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Stevens,
Pend Oreille, Spokane, Lincoln, Grant
Adams, Whitman counties)

Region 2 OCCP

1002 N 16th Avenue
Yakima WA 98909
(509) 454-7680; (509) 575-2713.

(Kittitas Yakima, Benton, Franklin,
Walla Wall, Columbia, Garfield,
Asotin counties).

Region 3 OCCP

840 N. Broadway, Building A, #540
Everett, WA 98201
(425) 339-4771; (425) 339-1928.

(Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island,
San Juan counties).

Region 4A OCCP

2809 26th Avenue S.
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 721-6875; (206) 721-6941.

(Seattle, North King County, Burien)

Who do I call if I have further concerns?

OCCP Regional Manager (see number above)

Children's Administration Constituent Relations	360-902-8060
Office of the Family & Children's Ombudsmen	1-800-571-7321

Region 4B OCCP

1313 West Meeker, Suite 102
Kent, WA 98035
(253) 872-4033; (253) 872-2266.

(Bellevue, Bothell, Kirkland,
Renton, Kent, Auburn and vicinity)

Region 5 OCCP

1949 S State Street
Tacoma, WA 98405
(253) 597-4271; (253) 593-2525;
(360) 475-3599)

(Pierce, Kitsap counties)

Region 6 OCCP

5000 Capitol Blvd, Room 206
Olympia, WA 98504-5716.
(360) 236-7045; (360) 236-7050;
(360) 417-1443; (360) 737-2107

(Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor,
Mason, Pacific, Lewis,
Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Skamania,
Clark, Klickitat counties)

DSHS 22-159(X) (6/98)



Child Care Complaint Process

What happens when there is a complaint about a Child Care Home or Center?

Please staple or tape when mailing.

FROM:

STAMP



Child Care Complaint Process

This brochure explains what happens when complaints about child care are registered with Children's Administration Intake. Complaints can be investigated by the Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) Child Protective Services (CPS) or the Office of Child Care Policy (OCCP) licensors, depending on the type of complaint.

Parents

When a parent is concerned about a situation in a family child care home or child care center, they can call the local Children's Administration Intake to make a referral.

Child Care Providers

Child care providers may be contacted after a parent complains to Children's Administration Intake about a situation in the family child care home or child care center.

What happens next?

All referrals/complaints are entered in the Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration computer system for tracking.

Depending on the nature of the complaint either the OCCP licensor or the DLR CPS worker will investigate. Parents will be informed if the complaint is outside the scope of licensing; for example, the provider requires payment to hold a space during a vacation, the parent was told about it in the provider's policies and procedures, but the parent now has a complaint about the policy.

What determines if the complaint is investigated by CPS or OCCP?

DLR CPS staff investigate complaints about child abuse and neglect in child care facilities. These complaints include:

Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse
Physical Neglect	Medical Neglect
Exploitation	Sexual Exploitation
Emotional Abuse	Death As a Result of Neglect/Abuse

OCCP staff investigate complaints regarding violations of licensing rules in child care facilities or complaints about a person who is providing unlicensed child care. These complaints include:

Overcapacity	Health and Sanitation
Inadequate Program	Inadequate Nutrition
Nuture and Care	Supervision
Discipline	Understaffed
Age Groupings	Group Size
Unlicensed Care	Substance Abuse
Reports/Record Keeping	

If DLR CPS determines the complaint should be investigated, based on their criteria, what happens next? DLR CPS workers:

- Notify parents or guardians and the child care provider of the complaint.
- Conduct interviews with possible child victims, witnesses, the child care provider, and others relevant to the complaint.
- Review the licensing file and may review provider files and policies.
- Complete the investigation within 45 days unless the time limit is extended.
- Determine if the complaint is child abuse and/or neglect as determined by law (RCW 26.44) and rules (WAC 388-15-130).
- Notify the provider, parent, licensor and other concerned parties of findings within five days after the investigation is completed.

If the complaint is investigated by OCCP, what is the procedure?

OCCP determines if the complaint is a Priority 1 or Priority 2 for investigation.

PRIORITY 1 COMPLAINTS INCLUDE:

- Safety or health hazards
- Supervision problems
- Accidental injury
- Excessive discipline
- Mistreatment of a child.

Priority 1 licensing complaints are responded to within five working days after the OCCP licensor or regional manager receives the complaint.

PRIORITY 2 COMPLAINTS INCLUDE:

- any complaint not included in Priority 1.
- any report of illegal operation.

Priority 2 licensing complaints are responded to within ten working days after the OCCP licensor or regional manager receives the complaint.

In either priority, staff will respond as appropriate to the situation by making a visit to the facility, a telephone call to the provider, or a letter.

ACTIONS A LICENSOR MAY TAKE DURING AN INVESTIGATION INCLUDE:

- Making an unannounced visit to the child care home or center.
- Observing at the child care home or center.
- Reviewing provider files and/or records.
- Interviewing staff, parents, other interested parties.
- Sending a notice letter to an unlicensed provider.
- Contacting other involved agencies regarding their role in investigation (for example, Assistant Attorneys General, Department of Health, Fire Marshal, USDA Food Program, Office of Special Investigation, Operations Review, Prosecuting Attorneys, etc.)

THE LICENSOR IS RESPONSIBLE TO THE PROVIDER TO:

- Describe concerns and issues clearly and respectfully.
- Offer open communication and accept provider feedback.
- Offer technical assistance.
- Inform the provider about the investigation proceedings, within disclosure guidelines.
- Determine the outcome together with the provider, if possible.
- Consult with Office of Foster Care Licensing staff when the facility has a dual license.

What does OCCP do when the investigation of the complaint is completed?

- OCCP will inform the person making the complaint, the child care provider, resource and referral agencies and other involved parties of the results of the investigation, and actions taken as a result of the investigation.
- If licensing violations are found, licensors will develop a plan with the provider to correct the situation. Licensors will monitor the facility to ensure compliance with the plan.
- If the plan is not successful, or if the past history of noncompliance, or the immediate situation warrants, the licensor may take licensing action. This may include imposing fines, changing the license status, revoking, or suspending the facility license.

THE LICENSOR WILL RESPOND TO PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE COMPLAINT AT TWO POINTS:

- When it is determined if the complaint is being investigated by DLR/ CPS or OCCP staff.
- At the conclusion of the investigation.